House Ethics Committee

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Hearings Slated on CIA Data Leak

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After its staff questioned more than 400 persons in a vain attempt to find out who leaked the secret House CIA report last winter, the House ethics committee decided yesterday to hold hearings starting July 19 to see if it can learn any more.

Some committee members reportedly favored reporting to the House that they were unable to determine how the report of the House intelligence committee had been leaked to CBS correspondent Daniel Schorr and printed in The Village Voice, a New York weekly.

But since the House had directed the committee to make the inquiry, the committee decided to make a final try with hearings by the 12-member committee. All the preliminary investigation has been done by special counsel and a team of retired FBI agents.

Committee Chairman John J. Flynt (D-Ga.) said that "to the best of my recollection no one has volunteered information" on who leaked the report. But he added that "we have some pretty clear-cut information on how it may have been done."

Flynt would not say who will be called as witnesses to testify under oath. Should the committee call Schorr and he refuses to tell who gave him the report, the committee could become involved in a sticky contempt-of-Congress versus First Amendment freedom-of-the-press situation. The committee expects to call "less than 50 witnesses," Flynt said. Some of the hearings may be open, he said.

The investigation has gone on for three months at a cost of $150,000.

Flynt also announced that the committee has retained Robert X. Perry, of the Washington law firm of Corcoran, Youngman and Rowe, as special counsel for its investigation of the sexpayroll scandal involving Rep. Wayne L. Hays (D-Ohio). That investigation will look into the charge of Elizabeth Ray that Hays kept her on the public payroll at $14,000 a year to be his mistress.

Perry has served as an assistant district attorney in New York City, as an assistant U.S. attorney here, and as an assistant counsel to the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee. He also helped in the defense of the late Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.) before the Senate ethics committee, which resulted in censure of Dodd by the Senate in 1967 for putting public funds to private use.